

February 4, 2018

Mark 1:29-31

Power To Heal

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This is an important sermon. Not that I have anything particularly profound to say about this Bible story. But this Bible story has some exceedingly profound things to say about you, and about many, many people you know.

This story, and this sermon, is about healing. How many people in this room today need some kind of healing? Healing of the body, healing of the mind, healing of the spirit?

How many people do you know who need healing in some fashion? Healing from cancer? Healing from chronic pain, from depression, from addiction? Healing in their relationships, in their families, in their self-image? Healing of past hurts, of past trauma, of past abuse? Healing from a broken heart, healing for their grief, healing for their spiritual wounds and spiritual guilt?

So this is an important sermon, a very important Bible story, for all of us, and for so many others. Today's story makes a simple, yet explosive, assertion: Jesus has power to heal.

Jesus has power to heal. When Jesus of Nazareth appeared on the scene publically, he quickly attracted tremendous attraction because he had power to heal. People flocked to him because Jesus was able to heal their maladies and disorders. Oh, he was a great teacher,

and an awesome preacher. But his power to heal was something truly special.

See, Jesus had come to reveal God to the people, to make God's power and wisdom manifest and evident. God wanted everyone to know that he is a God of healing. God's heartfelt desire is for his people to be healed of all their bodily ailments, all their mental anguish, all their spiritual guilt. God's will is that his people would be whole, restored, healthy. So Jesus walked around healing God's people. Jesus, Son of God, came with power to heal.

He healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law. She had a fever – the flu, maybe. Jesus took her by the hand, lifted her from her bed, and she was healed. And I love the little detail that is included here: "... the fever left her, and she began to serve them." It must have been Super Bowl Sunday, so the mother-in-law heated up a pot of chili and some nachos for Peter and his friends. Because she had been healed! The Bible story says that Jesus came into that woman's house with power to heal.

Now, let's take this a step or two further. It's one thing for us to read the story, and believe Jesus had power to heal. It's quite another thing for us to say, "Jesus has power to heal." Do you really believe that?

I do. Our Lord is not physically walking the halls of Wake Med Hospital, taking people by the hand and curing them instantly. But don't you think Jesus is capable of working through doctors and nurses, healing through medicines and treatments, curing via therapists and counselors? God is healing people every day! I believe that Jesus has power to heal. He may be using different

means at times today, but I see God healing people all the time.

But not all people. Not all the time. And this is where it gets really hard. This is why this really is an important sermon. Because not everybody does get healed. Not every patient recovers. Not every prayer request card gets the immediate positive answer we all long for.

Why not? If Jesus has power to heal, couldn't he heal everyone? Why not?

Ever wrestled with that question? Many of us do. When loved ones suffer, when cancer returns, when dementia takes over, when friends or family die, when marriages fracture, when we see our kids aching inside and we can't help them, that question can haunt even the most faithful soul. Why doesn't Jesus heal them all? Why not?

Our Bible story is so important. Not because it gives us an easy answer to our question, but because we need help when we are wrestling with that question. We need God's help. This important story gives you God's profound perspective on healing.

The story tells you clearly that Jesus has power to heal. But the story reminds you, also, that your God cares deeply about your need for healing, about your suffering, about your problems. God doesn't just care about your soul, and eternity. He cares, also, about your bodily pains and worldly woes, about your fevers and your sick mothers-in-law. Jesus showed that. Jesus revealed that. God cares.

This important story reminds you, furthermore, from God's perspective, that no healing in this world is permanent. Peter's mother-in-law was cured of her fever; but she got sick again, didn't she? Every person Jesus healed eventually succumbed. They all passed away. The truth is that no healing in this world – not back then, and not today – is permanent. That's God's perspective.

But the story reminds you, finally, that your God has provided perfect healing, lasting healing, in his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus' mission wasn't just to bring temporary healing to a certain amount of people back in the first century AD. Jesus' mission was to bring God's healing for all time to the sin sickness of the whole human race. Jesus' mission took him all the way to the cross, where he died for your sins, where he accomplished your forgiveness, your salvation.

Put your faith in Jesus. And when life in this world does end, when you succumb, when you meet your Maker, then will come your perfect healing, provided for you in Jesus. In heaven, no more sickness. No more grief, no more sorrow, no more sin. Everlasting healing! For you, and for all who know and believe in the Savior, Jesus.

This is an important sermon for us, but not just for us. So many people in our world today need healing. When you're watching the game tonight, there will likely be someone in that room with you with a hurt that needs healing. Will that person know that Jesus has power to heal? Will you be the one to tell that person that Jesus knows their hurt? That Jesus cares? That Jesus has power to heal?

Lord, heal us. And help us let others know. Jesus has power to heal. Amen.